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ABSTRACT

Noting that what becomes of reluctant readers should be of great concern to a nation that advocates education and has traditionally been committed to principles of the higher order, this paper identifies the characteristics of reluctant or unmotivated readers and discusses what happens to them. Following background reflection on the limits people who can read but choose not to set upon themselves and their community, the introductory section of the paper presents a review of scholarly literature dealing with the problem of the reluctant reader, emphasizing articles on such topics as literacy, reading habits of the American public, and reading motivation. The next section of the paper discusses characteristics of the reluctant reader, including lack of interest in or anxiety about reading, and recommends strategies to applying early in a child's reading development, including reading aloud to children and searching out materials that are interesting to young readers. What happens to reluctant readers is examined in the next section of the paper, with particular focus on George Steiner's theory that power in the United States will ultimately belong to the alliterate. The paper concludes with a summary linking the American educational system with social conditions and posits the belief that understanding and acquiring a value for reading is as important a factor in the furtherance of literacy as is teaching illiterate adults basic reading skills. (MKA)

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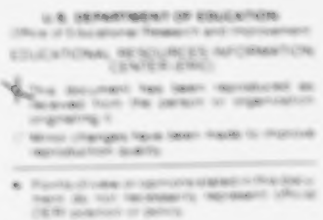

What Happens When Readers Do Not Read?

The Problem of Reluctant Readers

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Abstract

This paper will attempt to present information and analysis about people who can read but do not. They may or may not be found in remedial reading classes as students. They are frequently identified as reluctant or unmotivated readers early in their school years. The organization of this paper, after an introduction, is to identify the characteristics of reluctant readers and to discuss what happens to them. The consequences of a reluctant reading public is also discussed. Significant contributions from scholarly literature will be presented.

What Happens When Readers Do Not Read?

The Problem of Reluctant Readers

John Hay, a distinguished naturalist and gifted writer, said, "Communion with life means understanding its skills; otherwise it becomes a junkyard of castoff opportunities."[1] For those who can read but do not, communion with life will probably be diminished to some degree. People who do not read may be placing limits on themselves; their personalities may be less thoughtful than those who do read.[2] William Gray and Bernie Rogers, reading professionals, present research to demonstrate that reading relates to maturity: "It is assumed that, in the satisfaction of interests and needs through reading, a mature reader will continue to grow in capacity to interpret broadly and deeply."[3]

It has been suggested that capable readers who chose not to read have no advantage over those who are incapable of reading.[4] If immature behavior is related to restricted reading patterns, it may be possible to identify readers from nonreaders based on their behavior. As an example, the impressive black poet, Langston Hughes, frequently identifies intolerance and bigotry (immature behavior) through his poems. It seems to be a case of a reader (Hughes) putting his nonreading foes in their place and at the same time communicating a cogent message to the world. Here is a Hughes poem:

Ku Klux

They took me out
To some lonesome place
They said, "Do you believe
In the great white race?"

I said, "Mister,
To tell you the truth,
I'd believe in anything
If you'd just turn me loose."

The white man said, "Boy,
Can it be
You're a-standin' there
a-sassin' me?"

They hit me in the head
And knocked me down
And then they kicked me
On the ground.

A klansman said, "Nigger,
Look me in the face --
And tell me you believe in
The great white race."[5]

John Hay reasons that "No triumph of mathematics and abstract thought can elevate us above the whole company of existence."[6] For every adult that reads in this country there are probably two or more that do not (based on these assumptions: 60 million illiterates, 60 million readers who do not read, and 60 million readers who do read).[7] Forty percent of the adult population in Boston is now defined as technically illiterate.[8] Our nation, one of the most advanced technical civilizations in the world, ranks 49th in its

literacy level among 158 member nations of the United Nations. Switzerland and Israel are given credit for being the most literate societies on earth.[9] "Much of Japan's industrial efficiency has been credited to its almost universally high level of literacy."[10] Japan also has a relatively low crime rate that is probably associated with their high literacy level.

Ogden Nash, the prolific, witty poet, hits an appropriate cord relating to our nonreading public in his poem, "A Caution To Everybody":

> Consider the auk;
> Becoming extinct because he forgot how to fly, and
> could only walk,
> Consider man, who may well become extinct
> Because he forgot to walk and learned how to fly
> before he thinked.[11]

Many in this country fly metaphorically, with the help of technical inducements and distorted priorities, before they read, think, and study through complicated issues. Several bright individuals caught up and embarrassed by the Iran-<u>contra</u> affair claimed they were "just doing their jobs." They may have learned to fly before they "thinked."

<u>Introduction</u>

David Harman, a professor at Columbia University's Teachers College who has studied illiteracy for almost 20 years, says there is little empirical evidence to indicate America has a massive problem of adult illiteracy.[12] Harman believes our biggest literacy problem today is the reduced value of reading as an activity. This results in large numbers of adults who can read

but do not, or they have major deficiencies in reading comprehension and analytical skills according to Harman.[13]

An illiteracy conference at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education this past August (1987) provided Harman with a forum to make this comment: "There's a value to reading in people's lives that transcends putting a widget in a wadget. Literacy is a value, not a mechanical skill."[14] At this Harvard conference, Jeanne Chall made reference to Professor E. D. Hirsch, Jr.'s best selling book, Cultural Literacy (1987); she said Americans need more knowledge of history and society to read well.[15] Thomas G. Sticht who has conducted numerous reading studies for the Army and the Ford Foundation also attended the Harvard conference, and he attacked Jonathan Kozol's book, Illiterate America (1985). Sticht said it showed a silly understanding of literacy. In particular, Sticht objected to Kozol's analysis that about 60 million people should be classified as either illiterate or functionally illiterate (one-third of American adults).[16]

Knowing who reads, how much they read, and what they read are difficult questions to resolve. Estimates of the illiterate or functionally illiterate population in this country range from about seven to 73 million people.[17] There is sketchy information identifying the number of adults who can read but do not. Accurate quantitative information based on a standard criteria for the terms: literate, illiterate, functionally illiterate, reader, and nonreader may not exist. Readers are frequently defined as those who read widely and are serious about reading. Daniel J. Boorstin, the well-known historian, has this analysis: "Reading is a lot like sex.

It is a private and often secret activity. It is often undertaken in bed, and people are not inclined to underestimate either the extent or the effectiveness of their activity."[18]

On September 8, 1983, the front page of The New York Times had as one of their headlines: "Americans in Electronic Era Are Reading as Much as Ever."[19] This feature article by Edward B. Fiske was described as being based on extensive interviews with scholars, educators, publishers, and readers. These 16 random points were made by Fiske:

1) Women who used to read less than men now read more than men. One study by Larry Mikulecky and Nancy Leavitt Shankin found women read 14 minutes a day more than men (164 versus 150).

2) Reading is becoming more specialized.

3) Fifty-thousand book titles were published in 1983, the highest ever. In 1950, 11,000 book titles were published.

4) There are few reliable statistics on American reading habits.

5) The number of retail book stores increased 62 percent from 1972 to 1977.

6) Library circulation has grown at twice the rate of population growth since 1943.

7) Nine of 10 Americans 18 years or older read at least one magazine per month.

8) American adults read an hour and a half to three hours a day.

9) In 1923 R. B. Parson of the University of Chicago queried 314 adults and found the average daily reading time to be 113 minutes for men and 101 for women.

10) In 1972 Amiel T. Sharon of the Educational Testing Service asked a national sample of 5,087 adults what they had read the previous day. The average amount of all kinds of reading was 106 minutes. This effort by Sharon is thought to be one of the most thorough reading studies of its kind up to 1972. Sharon found these extremes: six percent of his sample read less than five minutes a day, and six percent read for eight hours a day. He also found that reading time increased with years of schooling -- from 55 minutes a day for those who never went past grade school to 194 for those with a college degree.

11) John P. Robinson of the Survey Research Center at the University of Maryland estimates that Americans spend about 10 percent of their free time, or about four hours a week, engaged in reading, and this figure has been relatively consistent for nearly two decades.

12) "Young adults read more than older people and contrary to many expectations, studies consistently show that retired people read less than when they were working."[20]

13) In 1978 Yankelovich, Skelly, and White did a survey for the Book Industry Study Group, a trade association of book publishers, and found that while half of Americans are book readers, the majority of such reading is done by a hard core of about 25 percent or about 23 million people. One reported characteristic of this core group is that they watched a lot of television.

14) There may be a shift taking place from fiction to nonfiction.

15) There may be less reading accomplished for recreation and more for specific topics.

16) From 1960 to 1977 the number of printed words read by the typical American adult every day declined from 11,000 to 8,500.

Fifty-one years ago (1936) the Readers Digest printed an article by Jerome Barry (condensed from Today) titled, "Americans Cannot Read."[21] Based on his survey of 1,690 adults, only one-half could read with reasonable ease. One-third could not engage intelligently in any reading activity. Barry's 1936 analysis relates to Kozol's discouraging findings that have been reported

for over 20 years.[22] Jonathan Kozol, a passionate educator and writer, has received awards from the Guggenheimer, Ford, and Rockefeller Foundations to study reading problems in this country. He believes human survival is the final, indispensable objective of all efforts to achieve universal human competence -- literacy.[23]

In 1935 the National Council of Teachers of English met in Indianapolis, Indiana, and proclaimed that educators want to turn out readers, not purists.[24] Paul B. Diederich of Ohio State University declared the average American adult reads less than one book a year. The largest amount of reading, according to Diederich, was accomplished by women clerks and stenographers. Their reading consisted of sentimental romance novels. The heaviest reading in most communities is done by junior high school pupils, said Diederich, and then it declines steadily with increasing age and education.[25]

Twenty-seven years later (1962) the American Library Association (ALA) said adult book circulation increased 29 percent during the past five years (1957-1962).[26] This was based on responses from 100 public libraries. ALA President Florinnell F. Morton said it appears that electronic media does not detract from education and reading but seems to encourage it. Marianne Svensson, chief librarian in Ludvika, Sweden, found that television afforded a rare opportunity to stimulate reading. Her 1962 conclusion came from studies with libraries in the United States.[27] In 1985 Julies M. T. Chan made an impressive, but perhaps extravagant, claim that reluctant readers will gladly read in order to succeed when using a computer.[28]

A recent, serious study of reading motivation (1983) by John F. Howell and Theodora A. Sylvester identifies two significant causes that contribute to reluctant readers: the overuse of television and a decline of adults who read to their children.[29] The television industry estimates that two million children under 11 years old are still watching T.V. at midnight each night. The average kindergarten graduate has already seen more than 5,000 hours of television; this is more time than it takes to obtain a bachelor's degree.[30]

Characteristics of Reluctant Readers

Definitions of those who can read but do not often employ the term reluctant reader. Mary F. Lenox said a reluctant reader is one who lacks motivation and is likely to have a permanent non-reading habit; this is the rule rather than the exception. This reluctant reader may or may not have special emotional or physical handicaps, may or may not have a reading ability below his or her chronological age, and may or may not get good or even mediocre grades.[31]

Thomas Cloer, Jr., says, "The term 'reluctant reader' has become commonplace in our professional jargon."[32] This type of student finds reading a real source of anxiety. Reasons cited for this reading hostility range from broken homes to television according to Cloer.[33] Sheryl Joseph and Diane L. M. Wittig identify the reluctant reader as a capable reader who chooses not to read and, therefore, has no advantage over the person who is incapable of reading.[34] A group of librarians have identified reluctant readers as those students who, because of lack of interest,

lack of reading ability, or a combination of both, do not enjoy reading as a leisure activity.[35]

Many reading professionals are quite concerned about reluctant readers, and they have identified strategies to be applied early in a child's reading development. Research indicates that reading aloud to children of preschool and elementary age improved vocabulary, comprehension, syntex, and fostered a richness of language unattainable otherwise.[36] In 1977 Sandra McCormick reviewed studies that prompted her to state: "Research now provides evidence of the direct relationship between reading aloud to children and reading performance, language development, and the development of reading interests."[37] Reading aloud to children seems to stimulate their motivation to read and their reading skill.

James L. Thomas and Ruth M. Loring edited a volume titled Motivating Children and Young Adults to Read -- 2 that discusses interests in reading.[38] One of the articles within this volume is "Motivating Reluctant Readers: A Gentle Push" by Hillary Taylor Holbrook.[39] Holbrook claims young people who cannot read at all are far outnumbered by young people who can read but do not.* If this circumstance applies to adult populations then 120 million or more adults may not read (includes illiterates and readers who do not read). Holbrook has a sound presentation and suggests that students in their middle grades and up start to lose an appreciation of or

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*This observation is frequently mentioned within scholarly literature on reluctant readers, but no specific research studies are identified in support of it.

value for reading.[40] Elana Rabban's article, "Reaching the Able but Unwilling Reader," provides some information regarding college students and college graduates who do not read beyond the requirements of their classes or jobs.[41] Rabban believes these students and graduates must be coaxed to read using whatever material interests them.

John Crompton indicated the most remarkable development in British publishing for young people during the last decade has been an emergence of several paperback series aimed at reluctant reader markets. Macmillan's Topliners remain the most successful series.[42] Crompton said, "I can only state my belief that it is reading which is more likely to produce the self-awareness that can lead to action or the refusal to be bamboozled any longer."[43]

Many reading teachers in and outside this country are quite aware that interesting material must be found to engage students. The Manitoba Department of Education in Canada has organized an assortment of 400 engrossing books with an annotated bibliography.[44] In this country Carol LaSasso of Gallaudet College uses the National Enquirer with unmotivated readers.[45] Nicholas P. Criscuolo of New Haven Public Schools claims to have 10 strategies that effectively help the unreachable reader. Rock albums, scrapbooks, and the current television guide are part of his 10 strategies.[46] R. Baird Shuman offers advice covering a variety of ways to interest reluctant readers from reading activity logs to using comic books.[47]

L. D. Briggs has identified some characteristics of children who are not motivated to read: they do not show interest in

stories or books; they may be shy, quiet, and unresponsive; day-dreaming or an attitude of indifference is common; displays of anxiety or nervousness when reading may be observed; the child may become antagonistic toward reading; display little or no concern about progress in reading; the child may not see the value in learning to read; and these children usually do not check books out of the library.[48] Unmotivated, beginning readers are on their way to being reluctant readers as adults. Characteristics observed in unmotivated, young readers are also found in adult reluctant readers (i.e., antagonistic toward reading and see no value in reading).

Interest in content and mastery of skills are important and indispensible to reading motivation.[49] Cloer gives further advice: "In the early stages of language arts instruction, it is essential that students be provided with predictable print that can be read with success."[50] The significance of getting off to a good start and developing a motivation to read cannot be over-stated. However, many adults who can read do not; the consequences are not inspiring. In addition to being the world's largest debtor nation,[51] we may have a deficit in literate national leaders. If our leaders on many levels do not read and enrich themselves, what is the result?

What Happens to Reluctant Readers?

In many cases adult reluctant readers are busy, successful people who do not value reading. Other than required job related reading, they do not make time to read. Joseph R. McCarthy, United States Senator from Wisconsin and one of the most gifted

demagogues ever bred according to Richard H. Rovere, is a good example.[52] McCarthy was a vulgarian by method as well as instinct. "He belched and burped in public."[53] Horse racing, poker, drinking, and speculating on soybean futures occupied nearly all of his spare time and considerable official government time. Yet, he held two Presidents captive, Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower, or nearly captive as any Presidents of the United States have ever been in the conduct of our nation's affairs.[54] Eleanor Roosevelt said, "McCarthy's methods, to me, look like Hitler's."[55] Indeed McCarthy was no polite thinker or reader. But the erudite William F. Buckley, Jr., was a supporter of Joe McCarthy. Buckley and L. Brent Bozell published a book in 1954 titled McCarthy and His Enemies.[56] They make the breath-taking assertion that "McCarthyism ... is a movement around which men of good will and stern morality can close ranks."[57]

Those who read are likely to have many valuable insights that nonreaders do not possess. Frequently it's difficult to identify these insights and determine their contributions. Reluctant readers give us another puzzle in that a lack of literacy does not necessarily slow one's career in this country. In the early period of our nation's history, Patrick Henry was not noted for his reading. Andrew Jackson was not a book person or a newspaper reader. J. P. Morgan, the Elder, did read. Charlie Crocker of the Southern Pacific Railroad, a brilliant but almost illiterate engineer, could barely read. Alben Barkley read very little, mostly bills before Congress, but his friends, Lister Hill and Harry Truman were great readers. Sam Rayburn read to improve on

his brief formal education when he first came to Washington, D.C., but he read little, except bills, in his later years. Rayburn enjoyed his farm and fishing. Dwight Eisenhower read only Westerns and mysteries; he allegedly used his office when President to get advance proofs of a Western serial he had started. A. B. "Happy" Chandler, two-term governor from Kentucky, United States Senator, and Baseball Commissioner, has never been accused of reading anything except his press releases and some newspapers.[58]

To complicate matters there is evidence of influencial people who were strong readers but received little formal education. H. L. Mencken, Eugene O'Neill, Harry Truman, John Steinbeck, William Faulkner, Woody Guthrie, and Eric Hoffer never earned a college degree. Hoffer never went past the sixth grade, and Faulkner did not finish high school. However, each of these seven men had a significant person in their lives who urged reading. This influencial person was their mother in most cases.

George Steiner, a respected intellectual, has published a worthy article on reading titled "Books in an Age of Post-Literacy" (1985).[59] Steiner claims "... we know astonishingly little about the history of reading, about the changes in economics, in the sociology, in the psychology, in the techniques and habits of feeling, even of physical action and attitude, which surround our reading of a book."[60] A decline in reading skills of the middle-class reader is Steiner's overwhelming concern.* Nearly 80 percent

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*Roger Farr reports, as of 1979: "The trend has been for a consistent increase in reading achievement at all grade levels since the time that test data information in the United States was first recorded." (Roger Farr quoted by Jeanne S. Chall, "Literacy: Trends and Explanations." American Education 20 (9), November 1984, pp. 16-22. A publication of the United States Department of Education, p. 17.)

of America's literate teenagers (some are educated young adults in universities) can no longer read without an attendant noise -- radio, television, record player or tape recorder.[61] Steiner observes that we know very little about simultaneous conflicting input, but a common sense hunch suggests profound alarm. The question of what future there is for the classic art of reading is a genuine concern to many professionals.

Steiner believes the art of reading will fall into three distinct categories:

1) Reading for distraction or momentary entertainment -- the airport paperback is an example.

2) Reading for information or knowledge -- what Thomas De Quincey called "the literature of knowledge" to distinguish it from fiction, poetry, and drama which he called "the literature of power."

3) Reading in the old, archaic, private mode. But this may become as specialized a skill and avocation as it was in libraries of monasteries during the Dark Ages.[62]

One of Steiner's fantasies is to abolish the humanities and liberal arts then convert our undergraduate universities into schools of reading.

According to Steiner, power in this country is going to belong to the aliterate. This process already seems to be in motion; it emerges as being obvious and threatening when a crisis or scandal exposes the interworkings of government or big business. Suddenly

we are made aware that quite ordinary, unsophisticated minds have been at work subverting delicate policy and abusing their defined positions. A public trust is broken. This is more than just a temporary trauma, it amounts to a national disgrace. At this point our educational system should give itself some fresh, constructive criticism.

Reading and study on many levels does help to develop and foster certain qualities of leadership. Unfortunately it is not an infallible process. Educators and parents can influence the procedure in a positive or negative way. Much of Sir Winston Churchill's literary knowledge was gained through self-education; he was a strong reader and had considerable encouragement to read from his mother.[63] Great Britain still publishes more serious book titles over any 12-month period than the United States. This fact may be one consequence of a literacy identification that distinguishes Americans from the British.[64]

In this country a 1982 survey indicating how business and other professionals spend their time on the job revealed: nine percent was spent on writing, 16 percent reading, 30 percent speaking, and 45 percent listening.[65] Based on these findings, professionals who do not read beyond job requirements will average 26 hours of reading each month exclusively in their work environment. Reluctant readers may not be achieving much when they are away from work. They will not be reading anything for self-improvement, for study and research, for knowledge, or for recreation (reasons people are motivated to read).[66] Reluctant readers will be missing some knowledge along with the unique experience of thoughtful study

with books.

Summary

Recognition of the reluctant reader problem has not been ignored, particularly for elementary and pre-school stages of student development. A report from the Commission on Reading, published in 1985, had numerous recommendations aimed at producing citizens who would read with high levels of skill and do so frequently with satisfaction.[67] Among 17 Commission recommendations that have been published and discussed in scholarly publications were requests that parents read to preschool children and for students to spend more time doing independent reading. Thoughtful advice.

While the problem of reluctant readers does get noticed, public attention along with government involvement seems to be fixed on illiterate adults.[68] It may be less difficult to make a strong reader of someone who does not know how to read than to undermine the rigid value system of a reluctant reader. Understanding and acquiring a value for reading is a most important factor in the furtherance of literacy. Aldous Huxley with his clean, direct wit said, "The problem of reform is the problem of breaking out of a vicious circle and of building up a virtuous one in its place."[69]

Our educational system and our social conditions are tied to each other. A breakdown in one reflects a breakdown in the other. As an example, reluctant readers are visible symbols indicating our educational system has failed in some way, but our society often rewards nonreaders and in fact promotes them to quite responsible jobs in government and business.

In the 1950_s Norman Cousins concluded that modern man is

obsolete unless he can stop world wars. No matter how strong the technological imperative to peace may be, it cannot be followed without improving communication.[70] If everyone in the world could read but chose not to, we would soon lose our cultural heritage and probably be more vulnerable to human weaknesses (aggression, greed, et al.).

Although reading helps to promote literacy, it may also serve in various ways to moderate vicious human desires. In a world stocked with nuclear weapons, literate people may represent a way to reverse threatening systems produced from narrow, escalating technology. If there are not enough literate people to oversee or deal with human weaknesses, then what alternatives do we have? Are we destined to destroy earth?

A thoughtful Eugene O'Neill said, "The tragedy of life is what makes it worthwhile."[71] What happens to reluctant readers is of great concern to a nation that advocates education and has traditionally been committed to principles of the higher order. However, reluctant readers depict a reversal of our national education standard, and at the same time, they represent the best we have to offer in many fields. This strident, uncertain contrast should alert us to some probable flaws within our dynamic society.

Having a superior technical outlook without an active, literate perspective can denigrate our culture. If we cannot be an influential, literate state, our contentious technology may anonymously eclipse our desire to survive.

NOTES

1. John Hay, The Immortal Wilderness (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1987).

2. Mark E. Thompson, "What Does the Research Literature Say About Active Readers?" presented to the North Central Reading Association at the University of Notre Dame, October 22, 1984. College and Adult Reading, 13, 1986. Also found in Educational Research Information Center (ERIC) ED 250 665, April 1985.

3. William Gray and Bernie Rogers, Maturity in Reading: Its Nature and Appraisal (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956). p. 56.

4. Sheryl Joseph and Diane Wittig, "Reading Remedies for Involving the Reluctant Reader." Educational Research Information Center (ERIC) ED 192 276, 1980.

5. Langston Hughes, Selected Poems of Langston Hughes (New York: Vintage Books, 1974). p. 163.

6. John Hay, The Immortal Wilderness. p. 14.

7. These figures are based on 180 million adults that could read. About 60 million do not according to Jonathan Kozol and others, because they are illiterate or functionally illiterate. It is estimated that about 60 million can read but do not. Hilary Taylor Holbrook states: "Young people who cannot read at all are far outnumbered by young people who can read (poorly or well) but won't." Found in "Motivating Reluctant Readers: A Gentle Push" by Holbrook. Educational Research Information Center (ERIC) ED 236 562, 1983, p. 38. Presumably the remaining 60 million can read, and they do read.

8. George Steiner, "Books in an Age of Post-Literacy." Publishers Weekly, 227 (21) May 24, 1985, pp. 44-8. p. 46.

9. Ibid.

10. E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs To Know (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987). pp. 1-2.

11. Ogden Nash, I Wouldn't Have Missed It: Selected Poems of Ogden Nash. Selected by Linell Smith and Isabal Ederstadt (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1972). p. 260.

12. David Harman quoted by Lawrence Feinberg (Washington Post staff writer) in "Illiteracy Crisis Misread, Researchers Say." The Washington Post, August 17, 1987, pp. A1, A7, A8. pp. A1, A7.

13. Ibid.

14. David Harman quoted by Lawrence Feinberg, The Washington Post, August 17, 1987, p. A7.

15. Jeanne S. Chall makes reference to E. D. Hirsch, Jr., in The Washington Post, August 17, 1987, p. A8. Jeanne Chall has published an excellent article on literacy titled: "Literacy: Trends and Explanations." American Education (United States Department of Education), 20 (9) November 1984, pp. 16-22. Allan Bloom's The Closing of the American Mind (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987) is quite popular now, and it is close to Hirsch's thesis. Bloom's presentation is very scholarly; he suggests that young people with undergraduate degrees lack an understanding of the past and do not have a vision of the future. They live in an improverished present.

16. Thomas G. Sticht comments on Jonathan Kozol's book, Illiterate America in The Washington Post, August 17, 1987, p. A8.

17. Based on estimates from: The Washington Post, August 17, 1987. p. A8; Mark E. Thompson's paper, "What Happens To People Who Cannot Read? The Problem of Illiteracy," presented to the North Central Reading Association at the University of Notre Dame, October 24, 1986; and Howard Fields' "The View from Washington." Publishers Weekly, 227 (21) May 24, 1985, pp. 31-4.

18. Daniel J. Boorstin quoted by Edward B. Fiske in "Americans in Electronic Era Are Reading as Much as Ever." The New York Times, September 8, 1983, pp. A1, B12. p. B12.

19. Edward B. Fiske, "Americans in Electronic Era Are Reading as Much as Ever."

20. Ibid., p. B12.

21. Jerome Barry, "Americans Cannot Read." The Readers' Digest, 28 (168) April 1936, pp. 22-4.

22. Jonathan Kozol, Illiterate America (Garden City, New York, 1985). Kozol was doing research for his first book, Death at an Early Age, in the early 60's. For 18 years he has lived in the neighborhoods of disadvantaged students in order to understand their plight. Illiterate America is his most recent book. He has published seven books on reading.

23. Ibid.

24. "Teachers: Educators Want to Turn Out Readers, Not Purists." Newsweek, 6 (23) December 7, 1935, p. 38.

25. Ibid.

26. "This Month at Random -- Books." Wilson Library Bulletin, 36 (6) February 1962, pp. 402-04. Also found in "ALA Surveys Reading in America." Library Journal, 87 (3) February 1, 1962, pp. 524-25.

27. "This Month at Random -- Books." Wilson Library Bulletin.

28. Julie M. T. Chan, "The Promise of Computers for Reluctant Readers." Library Journal, 110 (18) November 1, 1985, pp. 132-43.

29. John F. Howell and Theodora A. Sylvester, "Improving Reading Motivation." Education Research Information Center (ERIC) ED 227 454, April 1983.

30. J. Trelease, The Read Aloud Handbook (New York: Penguin Books, 1982) found in John F. Howell and Theodora A. Sylvester's "Improving Reading Motivation." (ERIC) ED 227 454, April 1983.

31. Mary F. Lenox, "The Reluctant Adolescent Reader: Action Steps for Librarians." Catholic Library World, 55 (8) March 1984, pp. 352-54.

32. Thomas Cloer, Jr., "Providing Direct Instruction in the Language Arts Class." Educational Research Information Center (ERIC) ED 246 387, March 1984.

33. Ibid.

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